

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
BOULEVARD PLANNING GROUP
DRAFT MINUTES/SUMMARY FOR OCTOBER 2, 2014**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 7:00 PM, Thursday, October 2, 2014 at Boulevard Community Center located east of the Boulevard Fire Station

A.ROLL CALL (Determination of quorum):

- Members present: **1)** Robert Maupin **2)** Earl Goodnight **3)** Chris Noland; **4)** Donna Tisdale; **5)** Michele Strand; **6)** Paula Byrd **7)** Jeffrey McKernan

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

C. APPROVE MINUTES FOR AUGUST 7TH MEETING:

M/S: MCKERNAN/MAUPIN: *Approve the August 7, 2014 minutes as written. Passed 7-0-0*

M/S: MAUPIN/MCKERNAN: *Approve the September 4, 2014 minutes as written. Passed 7-0-0*

E. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION:

- **TEAME Report:** The Jacumba refuse removal event was a huge success. EDCO had to send in two additional dumpsters (on top of the 6 dumpsters already there). 120 loads of trash and 40 loads to the chipper. A big thank you to the crews who helped load and haul this debris as well as the folks who went door-to-door. The efforts of the Boulevard/Jacumba Revitalization and Real East County Fire Safe Council in proving volunteers and spreading the word were commended. The next event is in Campo on October 18th. Free wood chips and mulch are available at the sites as well.
- **Chris Noland announced his need to resign from the Boulevard Planning Group** due to his new residence being outside of the Boulevard area. Chris was thanked for his years of service with comments that his presence and expertise will be missed.

F. ACTION ITEMS:

1. JACUMBA SOLAR MAJOR USE PERMIT; PDS2014-MUP-14-041, PDS2014-ER-22-001 NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT:

- Packages of information/maps were made available.
- Chair reported attending the Jacumba Sponsor Group meeting.
- County staff and NextEra Energy Resources, LLC were invited but could not make our BPG meeting.
- Their project gen-tie lines to the adjacent ECO Substation are not planned for undergrounding.
- Area is rich with cultural resources.
- BPG Comments are allowed.
- Boulevard and Jacumba are geographically close with interconnected projects/impacts.
- Jesse Marshall is NextEra project manager.
- NextEra confirmed they are part of First Solar.
- First Solar Projects include Campo Verde and SolarGen in Imperial Valley. SolarGen is reportedly being sued by Center for Biological Diversity over death of an endangered Yuma Clapper Rail.
- Concerns were raised about Jacumba groundwater resources.
- It was unclear if Jacumba Sponsor Group voted to submit comments or not.

M/S: NOLAND/BYRD: *Authorize Chair to submit comments with similar concerns to other similar projects proposed in Boulevard. Passed 7-0-0*

2. NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY & PUBLIC MEETING FOR THE JOINT DRAFT EIR/EIS FOR SDG&E'S PROPOSED MASTER SPECIAL USE PERMIT (MSUP) TO CONSTRUCT POWER LINE REPLACEMENT PROJECTS INCLUDING A NEW BOULEVARD ALTERNATIVE.

- The Chair reported that the DEIR/EIS "environmentally superior" alternative belatedly includes upgrading the existing line between the Crestwood and Boulevard substations.
- This was previously the Shu'luuk Wind gen-tie Line that was going to be a double circuit 138kv with SDG&E buying 100 foot easements. Now they are back to calling it "Fire Hardening".
- None of the maps or list of projects on SDG&E's project website includes the Boulevard line.
- The Chair asked at the PUC meeting where SDG&E claimed there are no plans for future expansion.
- Strand asked if she should abstain, due to proximity. Chair said no need to abstain due to much more than the required 500 feet distance.
- Strand recommended taking lots of pictures of the beautiful scenic vistas, because her entire south view was ruined by "Fire Hardening" pole replacement on Old Hwy 80—with no advance notice.
- SDG&E claims the majority of the work on Boulevard line segment has already been done. But it never got to the Draft EIR stage because the Shu'luuk Wind Project was voted down by the, the lease terminated and SDG&E's project was withdrawn.
- It was going to be combination of the new 138kv gen-tie line for Shu'luuk Wind project and fire hardening.
- Now they are claiming it's ONLY fire hardening.
- In the Chair's opinion, it's the missing puzzle piece to connect the Boulevard line with new 138kV lines that connect to SDG&E's new ECO Sub Station.
- When the Chair met with SDG&E's Jim Avery, during the Sunrise Powerlink project, he said they could just upgrade the existing local lines to carry renewable energy out of area. 11 years later here we are.
- Comments were made that SDG&E has had to conduct blasting for new poles.
- Dudek responded at CPUC meeting that project water sources are listed.
- Chair stated she could not locate any water sources in the bulky DEIR/EIS documents.
- Dudek was asked about height of new steel poles. The report drawings say they "vary in height".
- Chair said the DRECP should also be added as new information for MSUP because every single alternative includes a new 500kv line through Boulevard/Jacumba along the Sunrise Powerlink route.
- Productive farm land in Imperial County is being converted to renewable energy. Farmers are alarmed.

M/S: STRAND/MAUPIN: *Authorize Chair to submit comments to County with cc: to the PUC and/or others and recommend undergrounding upgraded lines from Boulevard-Crestwood, Crestwood-Cameron, and more if possible for visual impacts. Passed 7-0-0*

3. NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN (DRECP):

- Chair reported on the DRECP plan and every alternative includes 1-2 new 500kV lines through Boulevard/Jacumba and other rural communities, along the Sunrise Powerlink Route.
- Imperial County is included for massive conversion including all farm land
- Borrego Valley is included for San Diego County
- It appears that Imperial is being sacrificed, similar to East County (San Diego).
- When a community member questioned why/how the zoning has been changed, the Chair reported that the California Energy Commission paid for the new General Plan Update for Imperial County.
- Imperial County Supervisors and Planning Commissioners are starting to wake up and pay attention, but there is a lot of pressure on the state level, over \$1 billion in new transmission for the Imperial Irrigation District, with new direct current line proposed going north of the Salton Sea to San Onofre substation, 500kv from the Imperial Valley substation along with the Sunrise Powerlink.

- SDG&E claims they need to bolster the grid to make up for the loss of San Onofre.
- Two new powerlinks proposed through East County are along the same line as the Sunrise Powerlink, according to the maps
- BLM amended the McCain Valley National Cooperative Wildlife Management Plan for a single one-time utility route right-of-way. Now 1-2 more lines are proposed in the same area.
- Similar to the BLM's change to overhead lines for Tule Wind. Because they changed the land-use plan to industrial, they say it's ok.
- All the maps show new 500kv line(s) through Boulevard.
- SDG&E claimed it was almost geographically impossible to run Sunrise Powerlink through our area.
- Later, Cameron Durckel told us that SDG&E would never build another 500kv line here but SDG&E is doing surveying in Ocotillo right now. Signs on the trucks say "Utility Line Specialist".
- Due to previous political pushback, Anza Borrego is being spared, but Boulevard is paying the price.
- If the renewable energy incentives and tax credits go away, maybe the push will go away as well.

M/S: MAUPIN/NOLAND: Authorize Chair to submit comments on DRECP with focus on visual, cumulative, and transmission impacts. Passed 7-0-0

4. REQUEST TO CONSIDER ADDING "WELCOME TO MANZANITA" SIGNS ON LOCAL ROADS:

- Tim Cass just discovered that this had been controversial issue for decades.
- Chair reminded Tim that she had pointed this out earlier.
- Manzanita, according to the official maps (Thomas Brother's and USGS) starts at the 94 and Old 80 intersection and ends just past the Wisteria Candy Cottage.
- Tim provided some old advertising / history from the area.
- A community member said that it may cause confusion for tourists, possibly some locals, and SDG&E may get confused and not know where to put their powerlines (jokingly).
- Noland suggested support for addition of "Welcome to Historic Manzanita" signs with no name change for Boulevard.
- Kevin Keane noted that a precedent had already been set with Welcome to Tierra Del Sol signs.

M/S: McKERNAN/GOODNIGHT: Table this item and context map for now. Passed 7-0-0

5. REQUEST FOR UPDATE TO MTN EMPIRE CONTEXT MAP- FIGURE 2 BY TIM CASS:

- No discussion on this, since it was covered under Item No. 3.

6. RESIDENT REQUEST FOR GROUP SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FOR BOULEVARD COMMUNITY CENTER:

- Two kinds of applications; 20 pages for 501c3 and 4 pages for resident application
- Tammy filed the 4 page application that County can take over later.
- Full support from everyone she has talked to so far.
- Boulevard should qualify as low-income
- Over \$3 million available overall
- Support is needed from community and the Planning Group.
- If approved, project would address 9 items on the Revitalization Matrix.

M/S: BYRD/NOLAND: To support Tammy Daubach's request for support for CDBG Grant for Boulevard Community Center. Passed 7-0-0

G. GROUP BUSINESS: Announcements; correspondence; discussion items; project updates

1. REVITALIZATION REPORT:

- Haunted House on October 24th at the Mtn Empire Community Center from 5-8:00.
- Jacumba Fall Festival is October 4th from 10-5:00.
- Soitec has created the Mountain Empire Schools Foundation and the Board is being assembled.
- There are 11 spots on the Board, 6 of which are still available. Looking for volunteers from all communities.

2. FIRE SAFE COUNCIL REPORT:

- Letter from new Cal Fire Battalion Chief Converse—they will attempt to make as many community meetings as possible.
- Real East County Fire Safe Council met with Dianne Jacob and the Fire Authority.
- Good news is stations are better than last year.
- ISO ratings won't be looked at until they are sure the scores won't be hurt, maybe another year.
- The mitigated foam truck might be too big for the fire stations here.
- To encourage full time staffing, the requirements to become a reservist have been lowered.
- The Fire Authority wants the developers to work with them and community.
- Since this meeting, Cal Fire moved the Boulevard fire fighters to Jacumba and their Mt. Laguna overflow fire fighters are now in Boulevard.
- This was due to White Star being located in Boulevard.
- Boulevard Fire Department now has dark days again.
- At the Greater San Diego Fire Safe Meeting they learned that in order to get the SRA fees back in our area, our FSC will have to submit a grant application.
- They will award what they think is fair. Monies are slated for education and possibly prevention.
- The Real East County FSC is now officially a 501(c) 3.
- Congratulations were offered to Tammy and the Fire Safe Council.

3. CHAIR'S REPORT ON COMPREHENSIVE RENEWABLE ENERGY PLAN'S TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING :

- Chair reported on today's Comprehensive Renewable Energy Plan / Technical Advisory Meeting (first one).
- Jim Whalen attended briefly. The Chair stayed for the whole 2 hours.
- The Planning Commission requested the CREP because they wanted some form of coordination for all the big projects being proposed and having people (residents) complain.
- Members are appointed by the Director of Planning and Development Services, Mark Wardlaw:
 - Jason Anderson, CleanTECH San Diego who says we need large scale projects in East County and rooftop (balance)
 - Craig Benedetto, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce
 - Corinne Lytle Bonine, URS Corporation
 - Richard Caputo, San Diego State University
 - Douglas Kot, DVN GL, Green Building Council
 - Peder Norby, County Planning Commissioner
 - Ken Parks, San Diego Gas & Electric

- John Reaves, environmental attorney who works with something called Climate Lobby attorney,
- This group is Advisory Only, basically an Ad-Hoc Committee.
- They have to comply with the Brown Act and Public Records Act.
- Donna gave two of the CREP consultants a tour of the Boulevard area on October 1st: Erin Malcom Brandt and George Burmeister.
- The first CREP report will be out winter 2015. Public review and Planning Commission Workshop in spring 2016. Board of Supervisors action by summer of 2016.
- Goal is control, balance, no patchwork.
- Tisdale brought up broken promise issues for large projects, significant under estimation for water use, and other real world impacts.
- Insiders down in Imperial Valley say that the projects are not producing as much power as promised because they can't dump the heat in such a hot environment.
- Next meeting tentatively set for December 4th or 11th.
- Jim Whalen asked if SDG&E talked about their Request For Proposals for 150 MW rooftop solar, west of Suncrest Substation, north of the US/Mexico border and south of Camp Pendleton
- Chair replied no, and that Ken Parks said that this was a new concept to him.
- Whalen said that request was sent out about 3 weeks ago.
- Chair reported that NextERA representative commented at the Jacumba Solar Presentation that this area is not considered local in-basin.
- Whalen stated that Chapman solar is going forward.
- For each MW of energy storage they need one 40' container
- Current focus is on lithium battery storage.

4. **2014 GENERAL ELECTION FOR BOULEVARD PLANNING GROUP SEATS 2, 4 & 6:**

- Chair reported that all three incumbents got their checks back since there were not enough candidates for a run-off election.
- Same thing happened at the last election.
- Incumbents will be formally appointed by the Board of Supervisors.

5. **SDG&E'S ECO SUBSTATION:**

- SDG&E reports to CPUC state that construction is almost completed.
- All bulk water sales are now coming from City of San Diego.

6. **TULE WIND'S LEASE APPLICATION HEARING WITH STATE LANDS COMMISSION TO ALLOW WIND TURBINES, ROADS, INFRASTRUCTURE:**

- The lease hearing has been moved to December due to need for Iberdrola to provide more information.

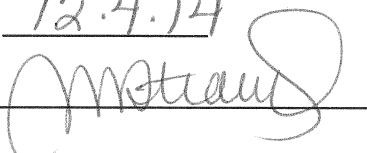
7. **SOITEC SOLAR PROJECTS (PDS2012-3910-120005): DRAFT PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT (DPEIR) REPORT FOR FOUR BOULEVARD PROJECTS WITH 7,409-8,415 CPV SOLAR TRACKERS @ 1,200 SQ FT EACH:**

- Jim Whalen reported that the County has finished their response to comments on the EIR.
- Current time frame for the hearings is unknown.
- Soitec included a revised groundwater investigation, as required by the County.
- A local resident reported that Soitec's Patrick Brown is still trying to get all the necessary ROW easements for the Tierra Del Sol Solar gen-tie line.
- As of this week, Soitec has some TDS easements, but not all of them. Several holdouts remain.
- It was reported that Patrick Brown is telling people these projects are already a done deal and is strong arming folks trying them feel incompetent and to cave in. Brown was also described as being condescending and overbearing in his negotiations.

- The Chair reported similar complaints from Soitec's Newberry Springs neighbors.
 - Whalen reported that Lansing has regained control of Empire Ranch.
 - Bob Maupin reported that Joe Brown does have control of Soitec's Tierra Del Sol Solar project site, Soitec /Dudek have removed all the water well pumps from the TDS site, and the man who is running cattle on the property cannot pump any water for them. He is getting water for his cattle from Bob.
8. **NOTICE OF PREPARATION, INITIAL STUDY & REQUEST FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR) FOR ROUGH ACRES RANCH CAMPGROUND/CONFERENCE CENTER MUP: PDS2012-3300-12-021 (MUP): Public comment closed on May 19th:**
- Draft EIR is expected out soon.
9. **ROUGH ACRES RANCH ROAD MAJOR GRADING PERMIT: PDS2011-2700-15622: APPLICANT GREGG HAMANN:**
- No permit approval, yet.
10. **NOTICE OF APPEAL FILED FOR MARCH 25 COURT RULING SUPPORTING BLM'S APPROVAL OF IBERDROLA'S 200 MW TULE WIND:**
- The 9th Circuit Court of Appeal brief was filed by non-profit plaintiffs on October 1st, challenging BLM's approvals.
11. **TULE WIND PHASE II:**
- A new lawsuit was filed by POC Foundation, challenging Bureau of Indian Affairs approvals.
12. **NOTICE OF APPEAL FILED FOR WIND ENERGY ORDINANCE AND PLAN AMENDMENT:**
- No news.
13. **SEMPRA'S CROSS-BORDER HIGH VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINE, WITH IMPORT CAPACITY OF 1,250 MW, WILL CONNECT THEIR \$300 MILLION ENERGIA SIERRA JUAREZ WIND (ESJ) IN BAJA CALIFORNIA WITH SDG&E'S NEW \$435 MILLION ECO SUBSTATION:**
- Construction is underway
 - Several witnesses reported that the wind turbine blades for the ESJ project are being escorted by multiple CHP units on I-8 from Plaster City in Imperial Valley, through the US /Mexico border at Otay and then back to the La Rumorosa / Ejido Jacume project site.
 - Questions were raised on who is paying for the CHP escorts
 - Numerous complaints were made about being stuck behind the slow moving convoys that block traffic and prevent passing on the Mountain Springs grade section of I-8 between Ocotillo and In-Ko-Pah.

H. MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:25 PM/NEXT REGULAR MEETING SET FOR NOVEMBER 6TH, 2014:

Minutes approved by Group on: 12.4.14

Michele Strand, Secretary: 

For More information contact Donna Tisdale, Chair at 619-766-4170 or tisdale.donna@gmail.com